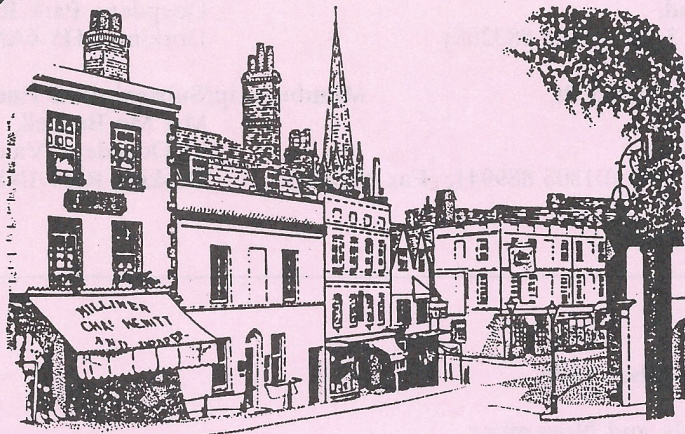


# DORKING & DISTRICT PRESERVATION SOCIETY



Established in 1929

## NEWSLETTER

No. 23

September 1999

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**NEWSLETTER 23: September 1999**

**Free to members**

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### EDITORIAL NOTE

**Y**our attention is politely drawn to the publication and copy delivery dates, which have been further revised as shown above. For reasons too boring to elaborate, this issue is out of kilter. Since time must be allowed for editorial, production and distribution hiccups, the new copy dates will be strictly observed and unless obviously out of date, late copy will be held over until the following issue. We trust a period of stability and punctuality will now ensue.

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## EDITORIAL

## DO CAR USERS HAVE LEGS?

A quarter of all car journeys are for a distance of less than two miles - One in 12 car trips are less than one mile in length. The average family spends £41 a week on its private motoring or 13 per cent of its total expenditure. (*Focus on Personal Travel*, Department of Transport etc, 1999)

Observation will soon prove that one quite small bus could easily carry everyone in all the cars occupying the *entire length of West Street* from Pump Corner to the Westcott Road at any given time of day - and more. How much more attractive it would be to walk around Dorking looking at the shops and buildings, how much easier to cross the road, how much more pleasant to breathe (particularly at Pump Corner) if only *some* of these car occupants used their legs. How do we get people out of their cars at least now and again and where there are reasonable alternatives?

Not that car users are likely to use even an improved bus service. Since deregulation by a previous government, buses are seen as unreliable, although this is usually down to the density of car and lorry traffic on major roads rather than shortcomings of the operators. If you look closely at the buses in Dorking centre, you will see they are carrying half-a-dozen passengers at most, and many, especially late in the day, have none at all. You are subsidising many of them with your council tax. This state of affairs is not for want of information as to when and where they run. Surrey County Council is quite good at dispensing that, publishing excellent guides and clear maps which are available free. Even so, patronage of buses in the Dorking area is pathetically thin. The railways do rather better, and are quite well used, at least by the elderly and the car-less young.

The trouble with public transport, no matter how good it is made, is that unless you live on a bus route or close to a railway station, *you have to walk some way to access it* and almost everyone has got out of the habit of doing that, although it was something no-one thought twice about 40 and more years ago. If you want evidence of this, try walking to the nearest bus stop or railway station: you won't meet many people on foot or on cycles on the same beat. This experiment can be repeated on foot or by cycle for another type of journey, one of up to 1½ miles to the library or nearest retail centre when you have nothing heavy to carry in one or both directions. Again you will be struck by the fact that you will not see many pedestrians or cyclists taking the same route. But you will see plenty of cars, at least some of them going no further than you are!

It may be said that most of the cars moving all day almost nose-to-tail through Dorking town centre are merely passing through on long journeys. It is difficult to get information about this, but until it is made available, we shall continue to believe that at least ten per cent, perhaps more, are on short runs. Even if some of those walked or cycled into town, it would make a difference.

Car ownership is still expanding; not to have one is to be classed as socially-deprived. Manufacturers are still trying to sell cars to existing car owners, whose cast-offs will then be sold to those pitiful beings who do not yet have wheels. The television programmes and national and local newspapers are saturated with car advertising and advertising features that boost the delights of motoring. Not surprisingly, congestion on the roads grows by the day, made worse by ever-larger freight trucks, many of them following curiously devious itineraries around Britain.

When shall we come, as a nation, to realise this simply is not something capable of limitless expansion? Dorking's West Street and the cluttered state of the A24 for much of the day are evidence enough of the folly of such a concept for those who care to stop, look and think. But when so occupied, do not breathe too deeply of the carcinogens emanating from those spacious diesel-powered 'people-movers' and chunky 4-wheel drives!

PS: *YES, your Editor is something of a hypocrite - he does own a car, but he has never possessed even a provisional driving licence. In 1944, in preparation for a landing on Rhodes (fortunately for all concerned, duly aborted) there were some hair-raising attempts (under a mad instruction that each member of his 12-man unit should know something of his comrades' skills) to learn to drive RAF vehicles of various sizes. This proved something of a disaster, over which it is right to draw a veil. In London and Surrey since, cycling, walking and public transport have proved adequate to meet most needs. However, it cannot be denied that he is sometimes driven by others, but at least he walks to the post box, to the railway stations and into the town more often than he sits all the way!)*

## NEWS NOTES

### CHANGES IN SOCIETY OFFICERS and COUNCIL MEMBERS

We welcome Sir Martin Wedgwood as our new Chairman, elected at the Annual General Meeting on 22 April. Barry Collins has become our first Vice Chairman, his term of office running for two years. This new arrangement is designed to provide some degree of continuity. Mr Collins is pursuing the possibility of a booklet covering the history of the Society over the last 20 years to update *Fifty Years of Conservation* written by the late Edith Mercer and published in 1980. He will also continue to be responsible for the School Project and Heritage Open days, and will be the DDPS representative on the Town Forum and in discussions with the MVDC on the South Street Caves.

Mr Nick Owen, Mr David Leggatt and Mr Nigel Gibbons had been co-opted on to the Executive Council. Mr Owen will be working with Miss Margaret Benselin on matters concerning Countryside Conservation, and Mr Gibbons and Mr Leggatt will be jointly concerned with enlarging our membership cover. This extra assistance in these two important areas promises to give a valuable boost to our activities.

Mrs Ann Champion has replaced Sir Martin Wedgwood as leader of the Planning Team.

### PLANNING TEAM VACANCY

We urgently require a volunteer to fill a vacancy on our Planning Team, a job that will appeal to any member interested in architecture, building techniques, urban and rural conservation, town and country planning or protection of the environment. Those with qualifications or experience in any of these fields would be especially welcome, but amateur enthusiasm and interest can be equally valuable to us. Please contact Sir Martin Wedgwood at Pixham Mill, Pixham Lane, Dorking (tel 01306-889941) for further information.

### PUBLICITY OFFICER

This post remains vacant. Will anyone willing to consider working for us in this regard please contact Sir Martin Wedgwood at Pixham Mill, Pixham Lane, Dorking (tel 01306-889941). Experience in publicity, advertising and public relations would be useful but is not essential.

### RAIL GALA DAY

Despite appalling weather, this event on 30 May, organised by Gareth Leslie, the Connex manager responsible for Leatherhead-Horsham services, and by the Surrey Hills Consortium, was an outstanding success, so much so that it is likely to become an annual one. The Society and Dorking Museum provided stands in the station booking hall, which proved to be the best place that day as those outside were lashed by rain and wind. Railway enthusiasts contributed substantially to our literature sales, and useful pre-publicity was obtained for the Dorking Rail 150. We shall participate again next year and hope for better weather even if this diverts attention from our sales!

### DORKING RAIL 150

One of the several unwelcome consequences of the controversial railway privatisation scheme devised by the last government is that the fragmentation of the former unified management structure into many disparate parts has produced a blame culture when things go wrong. That is serious, but a minor irritation is that the same factors tend to work to eliminate any kind of corporate pride in the railway system with its long history of public service. Thus it is now near-impossible to find anyone prepared to take an initiative to organise celebrations of important anniversaries. It is a near miracle that it can be done at all, as in the recent successful series of events marking the centenary of Marylebone station. It came as no great surprise that your Society could find no-one prepared to take an official initiative regarding celebration of this year's sesquicentennial of the opening of the Reading-Guildford-Dorking-Redhill railway, something with which we said we would be prepared to help.

Despite our best efforts, Thames Trains, the present principal major operating company over the line, showed little or no interest. We were left to do what we could ourselves, and this we have done, as reported elsewhere. The exhibition at Dorking Museum will continue until Sunday 12 September. Meanwhile a recorded interview has been completed for the local Talking Newspaper to give the visually handicapped some idea of what it is all about. We expect no thanks from Thames Trains, Railtrack or the other concerns who are together making such a fine job of running our fragmented, market-oriented railway system.

## EDITORIAL ADVERTISEMENT

In conformance with our established policy of noticing publications of local interest, perhaps brief mention may be made to the Editor's latest book, *The Railway in Surrey*, now on sale at Waterstone's, WH Smith and other bookshops. It is not (as some might expect) intended solely for railway buffs and anoraks. Indeed many of that breed will deplore its scanty reference to locomotive and rolling stock detail. Surprisingly perhaps, Surrey's railnet is still virtually intact at its maximum extent, having lost only 16½ miles, despite the best efforts of politicians and the road lobby. The book considers its history, evolution and future in the context of the county's modern social history, notably its residential and industrial development. The major role played by the railways in national defence and in nurturing the recreational activities of the metropolitan population before the era of mass car ownership and overseas holidays is also covered in some detail. Needless to say, the Dorking area is not neglected. The book is published by Atlantic, Trevithick House, Penryn, TR10 8HE, and its ISBN number is 0906899907; there are 240 pages and numerous illustrations.

## A SALUTE TO TWO CATERING DEVELOPMENTS IN DORKING

Firstly may we say how much we welcome the careful and pleasing restoration of the former *Star and Garter Hotel*, now renamed *The Lincoln Arms* after its position at the junction of Lincoln Road and the Station Approach. The use of potted shrubs recalls similar decoration of the same building at the beginning of the present century. After fears about demolition and a no doubt well-meant makeover as a New York night-spot - *The Happy Days Hotel* - it now once again forms a dignified and attractive feature at the northern entrance to the town, strategically situated to refresh and rest travellers by both road and rail.

And congratulations also for the splendid provider of refreshments at Saint Martin's Walk, who attends regularly each Saturday in his small but amazingly well-equipped van to dispense al fresco light refreshments in the little piazza which cries out for such a facility. We wish him well and good weather! The level of rents has driven at least one restaurant here out of business, but something of this sort is needed all the year round on this site, six if not seven days a week. Perhaps the management of the Centre will consider the value of such a facility in attracting people into the area, and trim its rent for shop premises to take account of this.

## SOME SUBSCRIPTIONS STILL UNPAID

All subscriptions are not yet gathered in - over 100 it seems in early May. If you have overlooked this matter, please send the appropriate amount NOW to Mrs Mo Bushell, 51 Deepdene Vale, Dorking, RH4 1NJ (tel. 01306-883941), together with any donation you may feel able to add. Mrs Bushell will also tell you if you have paid should you have forgotten whether you have!

Subscription rates are:

Ordinary .....	£5
Family .....	£7
Pensioners and Students .....	£3
Corporate (up to 10 staff) .....	£10
Corporate (11 or more staff) .....	£20

## RECRUIT YOUR NEIGHBOURS!

Have you ever suggested to your immediate neighbours they might like to join the Society, lent them a copy of the Newsletter to give them a flavour of what we are about? Membership leaflets are available from Mrs Bushell, 51 Deepdene Vale, Dorking, RH4 1NJ. We are aiming at 2,000 members as a Millennium target. The greater our membership, the better we shall be able to achieve our aims and ensure our environment is protected from unsuitable development.

## DEEPDENE GARDEN

There now seems no likelihood in the short term that Kuoni will offer any form of financial assistance to the garden restoration project. The Society has applied for a grant from the Surrey Archaeological Society towards the £3,000 needed to enable the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments to carry out a £5,000 archaeological survey of the site. Meanwhile consultants (Lear Associates) have carried out a Rhododendron Survey for £1,200, funded by the Deepdene Gardens Restoration Committee and the Surrey Gardens Trust, who contributed £500.

## ART FESTIVAL

Look out for the publicity regarding this MVDC event. It will include restored pictures from the Dorking Museum collection.

## AN 'IMPROVEMENT' TO COUNCIL OFFICES AND A DECENT WAR MEMORIAL?

It is estimated that some £55,000 will be required to improve (?) the Pippbrook Council Offices, putting right deficiencies overlooked or not anticipated when they were erected a mere 15 years ago. Just what is entailed has been only vaguely publicised. A letter in *The Dorking Advertiser* of 29 July from a councillor informed readers that this work was primarily to protect staff (and Councillors?) from 'mindless attacks' by members of the public. This suggests barriers which will spoil the open plan interior of this excellent building and presumably is an oblique reference to the consequences in some other parts of the country of the disastrous 'care in the community' policy of a previous government, and perhaps also to the increased abuse of drugs generally, although to the best of our knowledge, no such attacks have so far occurred at Pippbrook. Observation shows that other much larger council offices in areas of seemingly higher risk from this hazard appear to get by without erecting ugly barricades between their staff and the public. Nor are such precautions apparently deemed necessary in Surrey's public libraries and many other public buildings in this area.

Strangely, an earlier report explained that the expenditure was to protect staff from winter draughts, which if true, is a reflection on those who produced and approved the designs of the building back in the 1980s. Not that we have noticed any staff sitting in their overcoats and

synthetic furs, even in deepest winter. But whatever the perceived need, unfortunately for the council's public image, the news broke more-or-less simultaneously with a report that the Mole Valley Council were reluctant to spend a much smaller sum on restoring the town's war memorial. This has been so neglected that the names of those who sacrificed their lives are in many cases now illegible. For those who served for 4 years or more between 1939 and 1945 and were fortunate enough to return relatively unscathed, this seeming insensitivity left a bitter taste indeed, although in fairness, it has to be said that one councillor at least was moved to try to get some of the £55,000 diverted to the war memorial. He was voted down.

Later the local newspaper recorded that "after months of pressure", something was to be done about repairing the war memorial names but left doubts as to whether the result will be worthy of the town and the memory of the war dead.

Your Editor, who lost three close friends, all under 20, in World War 2, apologises for dwelling on this, but thinks it worthwhile, at least to suggest the Council does need to look at its public relations machinery, if only to try to ensure that in future potentially controversial decisions are fully explained in the local media.

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## TOWN ENHANCEMENT SCHEME AND THE DORKING MOVEMENT STUDY

Not unrelated to the previous item is the seeming muddle and waste of planning and administrative effort regarding 'town enhancement' and traffic flow improvements. Here again those paying in income and council taxes seem not to have been given the full story. Our *impression* (and it may be faulty) is that the town enhancement scheme has been placed firmly on the back burner as someone decided very late in the day that consultants had to be employed to find out how much it would cost, and the result was to establish it as unaffordable unless taken in very small bites. It also seems to have been decided

(surprised we are not) that prettifying the urban scene must await the outcome of attempts to tame the noisome (and noisy) road traffic flow through the medieval street pattern.

As for the latter, yet another public consultation is to be mounted in relation to a new and more extensive transport scheme that apparently replaces the one exhibited so elaborately and expensively to the public in Dorking Halls only last year. Remember what that cynical busman said about too many meetings and too little action?

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

### DORKING'S CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Will Dorking High Street next Christmas once again be decorated with banners of coloured lights? There can be few in Dorking who are not aware that strenuous fund-raising efforts are being made to ensure that it will be, by a Committee energetically led by Leslie Gilbert, Dorking's well-known jeweller.

You may think that this is something that Mole Valley District Council should pay for. Yet even if some - not many perhaps - would accept that there should be a small supplement on the rates to pay for it, levels of local government expenditure are strictly controlled by Westminster and Whitehall. Money is tight and has to be spent on essentials first. This is not to make excuses for the Council. It is how things are.

Mole Valley Council has been able, however, to go some of the way. It has committed itself to contributing £10,000, provided that the Dorking Lights Committee raises £20,000. Your

Society is doing its part by committing itself to contribute £1,000 towards this goal. Many of our Dorking resident members may have also already contributed at one or more of the Committee's many fund-raising events. If they have not, I do recommend that they do so. The future of Dorking Lights is in your and our hands.

These lines are being written at the end of July, and Leslie reports that the fund-raising is on target to raise that £20,000. This figure is merely the minimum required to attract the District Council's offer. The more that is raised, the greater the number of illuminated banners that Dorking will be able to have. Please send your contributions to Dorking Lights Ltd, c/o 90 High Street, Dorking, RH4 1AY.

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### SCULPTURE FOR DORKING

It has been reported that Dorking has received a very generous and anonymous offer of two statues. The first is of Thomas Cubitt (1788-1855) who bought Denbies, where his family lived until the 1980s. He was famous as the building contractor who built major parts of Bloomsbury and Belgravia in London. The second is to be of Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), Dorking's most famous son. The thinking is that the statue of Cubitt should stand outside the Council's Pippbrook offices, on the small mound that masks the Council car park, and that of Vaughan Williams should stand outside the Dorking Halls, the scene of the annual Leith Hill Musical Festival, of which he was the first conductor. These two statues, facing each other across the street, with the two buildings behind them, will create a memorable 'gateway' to Dorking for all who approach it from the east.

With this encouraging example, should we not go further? Could we not institute a programme

to commission sculpture to embellish suitably chosen locations in the town? Those of you who were able to attend our Annual Meeting last April, where we were addressed by David Gwillim, the Director of the Civic Trust, will remember the examples he showed us. There might be more commemorative statues, but probably most would be works of art, designed to entertain and to please. What better way to ensure that Dorking is a town that people would make a point of visiting, and of shopping in?

We would have to raise money of course and, with the Dorking Christmas Lights campaign currently in full swing, it would make sense to wait until it was over. But meanwhile it would be useful to know the views of members. You will have a chance to speak at the October meeting. If you cannot make the meeting, please write in.

## IN MEMORIAM

Three long-time supporters of this Society have died since the publication of the last edition of this newsletter. In April, shortly after I had handed over to Ann Champion the leadership of the planning subcommittee, we lost its longest-standing member, **Bill Merry**. Bill had been a member of the team that was put together by Les Capper in 1981, when George Green, who dealt with all planning applications single-handed (as well as being Chairman of the Society), stepped down. For 18 years Bill was an invaluable member of the committee. I quickly learnt the value of his opinions, and invariably heeded them. He is much missed.

Soon afterwards we learnt of the death of **Hugh Pite**, who for many years had been one of the Society's two architectural consultants. It has been an invaluable benefit to the Society to have had access all these years to his advice, based on his years of experience in the architectural profession, and he is remembered with affection.

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## DENBIES AND THE PERFORMING ARTS LIBRARY

As many of you will know, the Performing Arts Library (which includes the Vaughan Williams archive) has been under threat, as a result of the search by the County Council to cut expenditure and obtain the maximum benefit from the value of its assets. It has been given notice that it cannot continue in its present premises and has been looking for alternative accommodation. Sites elsewhere in Surrey have been discussed and it has even been suggested that it be split up. This Society has maintained strongly that it should remain in Dorking, which is both centrally located in the County and has its own strong links with Vaughan Williams, and that above all it should remain as one entity.

The offer by the Denbies Estate to provide accommodation for it, rent free, in a corner of the winery is most timely. It is, unfortunately, not without its problems. This huge building in the Green Belt was only allowed as an agricultural building. The wine-tasting, restaurant, receptions etc. were allowed as integral parts of a marketing programme for the wines of the vineyard. Parts of the building are already surplus to requirements, and this has made possible the generous offer to the Performing Arts Library. Our great concern, however, is that

I have also to report the death of **Mary Isabella Russ**, who died on 9 July, aged 90. Members of the Society of sufficient seniority will remember how for many years at all the Society's events, she was one of the main organisers of the catering and the teas during the interval in the programmes. It was a little while ago now, but it has helped to get us where we are today, and we remember her with gratitude.

Finally we were greatly touched to hear that **Mrs. Kathleen Irene Cole** of Sondes Farm, Martin Cole's mother, who died on 17 January this year, has left the Society in her will the sum of £5,000 for the benefit of the Dorking & District Museum. This will be of enormous use to the Museum in its continuing programme of modernisation, and we are deeply grateful.

if at some time in the future the building is no longer required as a winery at all, it should still remain in agricultural use. The presence in it of the Performing Arts Library would not be a welcome precedent.

Planning permission for use by the County Council is normally granted by the County Council itself, but it is required to ask the District Council whether or not it objects. This came up before the Planning Committee of the Mole Valley District Council on Wednesday 28 July, which raised no objection. Nor would they have had valid grounds if they had, given the wording of the Planning Policy Guidelines of Central Government with regard to the re-use of agricultural buildings.

The matter continues to give us cause for concern. We are not satisfied that the County Council has properly considered all the alternatives or, indeed, the true necessity of moving the Performing Arts Library at all. We are arguing that they should.

Martin Wedgwood



**PERFORMING ARTS LIBRARY USERS' GROUP**  
(Friends of the Surrey Performing Arts Library)

**PERFORMING ARTS LIBRARY - NEARLY THERE?**

**W**e are close to achieving our objective of keeping the PAL open and in Dorking but success hangs on the outcome of a planning application.

As you may know, Adrian White made the extremely generous offer to house the PAL free of charge, in existing buildings at his Denbies Winery. The County Council are very keen on this proposal and have put in the necessary planning application. Denbies is, however, in the Green Belt and planning consent is thus a sensitive issue, even for a non-commercial matter of such importance to the community. The agreement of both the County and Mole Valley District Councils is required, and we understand that the outcome must be regarded as uncertain. The planning application was made in April.

The PAL Users' Group had hoped that a way might be found to house the library in new premises which could be built adjacent to the Dorking Halls and form the core of a possible Arts Centre. Mole Valley District Council had said they were prepared to make space available as part of the redevelopment of the old garage site, and had offered to erect a purpose-designed

building. However, it became apparent that, setting aside the difficult question of cost, this could not be achieved in the short time necessary to meet the County Council's urgent and overriding need to make substantial cost savings. The only feasible short-term scheme to save the PAL is the Denbies proposal.

The Users' Group is therefore giving its wholehearted support to the Denbies scheme, and we have written to both councils accordingly. We very much hope that the huge public support for the PAL, which has been demonstrated over the last eighteen months, will have sufficiently impressed councillors that a way may be found to overcome any planning difficulties, and ensure that the scheme does receive the necessary approval.

There is little we can do now except anxiously wait. Both councils are aware of our support for the Denbies proposal and we have been specifically advised that a renewed letter-writing and lobbying campaign could be counterproductive.

**David Lees**  
Secretary, PAL Users' Group  
21 Daneshill, Redhill, RH1 2DW  
(Tel 01737-763565)

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**THE 1999 DORKING ANTIQUES FESTIVAL**

The 1999 Dorking Antiques Festival, which is to take place between October 2 and October 9, is being organised jointly by the antique shops of West Street to promote nationwide recognition of West Street as a major centre for their trade. It is also raising money for the Children's Trust at Tadworth. There will be a raffle with superb prizes, single dealer Dutch auctions of valuable items and talks by expert lecturers on English silver, antique cars, furniture, antique kitchen equipment, ceramics, clocks etc, to most of which members of the public will be invited to bring pieces for identification.

This Society greatly welcomes this initiative. It is not something to which we can easily give active support as a society, but as individuals we can all do our bit to help make it a success by participating in appropriate ways, in particular by attending some of the events. The programme is available from any of the participating shops in West Street.

The Museum, which will be opened especially on Sunday 3 October, is to mount an exhibition of old photographs.

**Martin Wedgwood**

**WESTCOTT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION**

We are always pleased to receive your excellent Newsletter and acknowledge that for March.

We thought that for your next publication you ought to let your readers know that the famous Dovecote and Bus shelter on Westcott Green have both been re-thatched and are looking resplendent! Both these projects were financed by Mole Valley District Council.

As an association, we are gradually planting up all available green areas with daffodil bulbs.

The A25 road through the village has been declared a 'Red Area' by Surrey Constabulary and as such they continuously monitor speeding vehicles through the village, and this policy is supported by a majority of the inhabitants.

On a personal note, I am delighted to see that Rachel Fardon has joined you.

**Tim Gowing**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Albatros House, Westcott, RH4 3NP

## DORKING & DISTRICT MUSEUM REPORT

### DORKING RAIL 150 EXHIBITION

The first railway service to Dorking was opened on the 4 July 1849 from Redhill. To commemorate this event, a special display of photographs, rail diagrams, documents and artefacts has been prepared, supplemented by a collection of models of locomotives and rolling stock which have run on this line. Alan Jackson is gratefully thanked for selecting items for the display from the museum collections and for preparing the diagrams, writing the captions and the historical notes. The latter have been put into a small booklet which is on sale in the museum, price 50p. The captions and text were very professionally printed by Fred Plant.

The photographs show old stations, trains, crossing keepers' cottages, sidings and surroundings, from hotels to horse-drawn transport. The display illustrates the influence the railway had on the commercial development of the area and its important role in two world wars. A handwritten schedule shows the fares for passengers to South Eastern and Chatham Railway stations from Dorking Station on and after 1 Feb 1907. On the back of this schedule there are some notes dating from the period 1923 to 1934 giving information relevant to Dorking Town station, for example, where the ambulance box was kept, when the wages were delivered, how many hand lamps there were (11), who the gangers were, what the cartage strength was (2 two-ton lorries) and how much the tenants at the station cottages paid (9s 2d or 10s 0d per week).

The exhibition was officially opened by Sir Paul Beresford, MP for Mole Valley, on the 3 July in the presence of local councillors Derek Edge and John Butcher, our President Brian Carr, our Chairman Sir Martin Wedgwood and many supporters of the museum. We thank all of those who have loaned or given items: John Higdon, Barry Collins and Stewart Robertson for models, Chris Heaps for the Deepdene railway station sign, John Scrace for many of the photographs and David Lafflin of Eveleighs for the display cabinet.

### CONNEX RAIL GALA DAY 30 MAY, DORKING STATION

The Museum had a sales and advertising table alongside the Society's display. This was a very well attended event and enabled us to reach a wider audience. We had sales of £158 for books and postcards.

### AT THE MUSEUM

We have now fixed the reception desk and carpeted the area behind for the comfort of the stewards. This desk came from the Beecham laboratories at Brockham Park. It will not come into use until the rearrangement of the museum exhibits is completed.

We are still awaiting the outcome of our applications to the Mole Valley District Council and South Eastern Museum Service for grants for restoration of many of the pictures which we plan to display with special lighting in the extension.

An inscribed brass plate with David Loram's name on it has been attached to the new cabinet for the display of our collection of Lord Ashcombe's minerals. David was for many years a steward at the museum and the cabinet was purchased from money donated in his memory.

### CONTACTS WITH OTHER MUSEUMS

By maintaining contact with other museums, we hear of their developments, gain knowledge of their holdings and their expertise on identification and conservation. Members of our committee have attended the South Eastern Museum Service forum at Brooklands Museum, the Surrey Museum Group AGM at the Museum of Rural Life, Tilford, and the AGM of the Surrey Museum Consultative Committee at the Guildford Museum and Art Gallery.

**Martin Cole**  
Chairman

### LIST OF ACQUISITIONS BY DORKING MUSEUM SINCE 1 DECEMBER 1998

1. White china model of ancient salt pot found at Stockton-on-Tees, inscribed with the Dorking crest \*
2. War Office Certificate presented to the "Dorking Temporary Hospital" for services rendered to sick and wounded during the Great War, signed by W S Churchill, July 1920 \*
3. Home Office Civil Defence Pamphlet - Basic First Aid - 1949 \*
4. Brick from the old wall at the rear of the Museum Extension, possibly from former Queen's Arms Inn - c. 1590 \*
5. Model figure of William Mullins, Pilgrim Father, of Dorking \* (*This is in our 'shop window'*)
6. Roman coin - a Sestertius of Antoninus Pius, Emperor, AD 138-161 \*
7. George III halfpenny dated 1772 \*
8. Metal clip for hanging skins at Gomshall Tannery \*
9. Suitcase made by R Adams, 6 West Street, & 67 High Street, harness maker etc, c. 1880-1939
10. Floor tiles from entrance to the Pavilion Cinema in South Street (1925-1963), demolished in 1999
11. Unopened "Home Security Tin" of Jacob's Biscuits, hermetically sealed (soldered) - World War II iron rations \*
12. Two victorian silver-plated 1-pint tankards, engraved "Ye Old House at Home" on base \*
13. *ARP Handbook No 1 - Personal Protection against Gas* - 1938 \*
14. Unused pack of forms for Prisoner of War Personal Details - World War II \*
15. Clay Pipe bowl found in Mr Steven Williams' back garden in Longfield Road, near newly-discovered well shaft \*

\* = On display in the Museum

B S Hodges  
Curator (Exhibits)

### DORKING MUSEUM LIBRARY

Since the beginning of the year there have been 64 accessions to the Museum Library, some with several parts. They include -

*Original documents relating to the Holloway estate, in particular Knoll Road;*  
*A collection of local billheads, orders, etc, (late 19c and early 20c);*  
*21 OS maps (25" to the mile, 1896-1934);*  
*17 OS maps (6" to the mile, 1897-1938);*  
*An inventory of Boxhurst (1913);*  
*8 diaries kept by John Henry Lance of Holmwood (not continuous), 1837-1870.*

All the items received have been documented and indexed and are available for study in the museum library.

In June two classes from Powell Corderoy School visited the museum, doing the children's quiz and also working in the library finding out about some of the families in the 1861 census of Dorking. They used the 1868 large-scale OS map of the town, photographs, and sale particulars, to get a picture of late Victorian Dorking.

Gladys Arlett and Eric Mansfield, past pupils but definitely not of the Victorian era, also went to the school to be interviewed by the children, who were particularly interested in life at the school before and during the last war.

The three mornings were very worthwhile, both for the children and for us. I realise that not all schools can get to the museum for study sessions, and I am beginning to think of ways of getting our material to them. For instance, if there is sufficient interest from teachers, we may be able to set up 'activity boxes', which could be hired out to local schools for a small fee.

For the past three years the library curators have mounted special exhibitions for Heritage Open Days in September. This year we feel we should devote more time to other library projects. However, we will be mounting an exhibition of old photographs from our collection during the first week in October to coincide with a special event being organised by the West Street Antique Dealers.

Mary Turner  
Curator, Library & Records

## THE DORKING CAVES

The contractor employed by Mole Valley District Council is expecting to complete the wiring work by early September, following which the Caves Officer and the writer will inspect the result including some minor remedial measures on the stair rails etc.

In the meantime, a new lease has now been agreed with the Council and signed by the Society's Trustees.

An innovation has also been introduced concerning the booking arrangements for future cave visits. A programme of times when the caves will be open will be published in *The Dorking Advertiser*, and anyone wishing to book a visit should contact the Dorking Halls Booking Office (01306-881717) where reservations can be made for timed visits. All visitors will need to have a ticket issued by the Dorking Halls to gain entry to the Caves, as this relieves the Caves Officer and his team of volunteers from accepting cash at the entrance and avoids complications in compiling formal income statements required by the Mole Valley District Council under the new lease arrangements.

**It is hoped that the opening times of the caves will be published in September immediately after Heritage Open Days.**

Barry Collins

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## HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 1999

Since the last Newsletter, preparations have been continuing for this year's Heritage Open Days which will take place on Saturday and Sunday, 11 and 12 September 1999.

This is the fourth year that the Society has organised a programme of events in the district, and it has become one of the main events of our calendar. It provides the opportunity to celebrate our local heritage through free visits to properties, guided walks, exhibitions and talks.

This year's programme contains a greater variety of events than ever before. Of perhaps special interest this year is the Dorking Cemetery entrance, Dorking's most recently-listed building, and the Lowfield Heath Windmill, where a ten-year restoration programme has now been completed which hopefully will be working for the first time for many years!

## IT TAKES A STRANGER TO SEE THE OBVIOUS

When Michael Gwillim of the Civic Trust addressed the Society after the AGM, he commented unfavourably on the pedestrian subway below the A24 at the end of the Station Approach. This horror dates from a period when road engineers were apt to regard walkers as an inferior species only fit to be banished to circuitous sub-surface paths and nasty tunnels which would all too soon become squalid. Mr Gwillim suggested politely that this feature tended to give a poor first impression of the town to people arriving by rail, adding that it seemed it could easily be replaced by a light-controlled crossing.

This appeals to us as a very commendable proposition and we hope that whoever is responsible (Surrey County Council?) will take it forward. There are existing road traffic lights at this point and it should not be too costly or too difficult to adapt them also to control a pedestrian crossing. Like many of its kind of the 1960s/1970s road improvement era, this subway is unpleasant enough in daylight; few would care to venture through it at night. Instead they risk death and injury by crossing on the surface.

An exhibition in the Dorking Museum celebrates the 150th anniversary of the first railway service to the town, and the Friends Meeting House in South Street will be the venue for an exhibition of Quaker Dress. An illustrated talk by Allan Brigham on the development of Dorking town from the mid-19th century to the present day will also take place at the Friends Meeting House on Saturday 11 September.

Our friends in Leatherhead have also been busy with a programme of events in the north of Mole Valley, and their programme will be included in the same leaflet as ours. All in all, an interesting and intriguing weekend to look forward to, and I hope that you will enjoy this year's programme. The free brochure of events can be obtained from the Dorking Halls, the Council Offices and the Pippbrook Library.

Barry Collins

*(See page 12 for list of properties open)*

### Brief Details of Properties Open

(Further information can be found in the Programme obtainable from  
Mole Valley Offices Pippbrook and Dorking Halls)

- Belmont School, Pasturewood Road, Holmbury St Mary -**  
Saturday & Sunday 11 - 2.
- Broome Park Ice House, Station Road, Betchworth -**  
Saturday & Sunday 10 - 4.
- Dalewood House, Box Hill School, Old London Road, Mickleham -**  
Saturday 11 - 2; Sunday 11.30 - 2. PRE-BOOKING NECESSARY (01372-373382).
- Dorking Caves, South Street -**  
Sunday only, hourly tours 11 - 4 (except 1.00). PRE-BOOKING NECESSARY (01306-881717).
- Dorking Cemetery, Reigate Road -**  
Saturday 10.30 - 4.
- Dorking Halls, Reigate Road -**  
Tours at 11, 12.30 and 2. PRE-BOOKING NECESSARY (01306-881717).
- Dorking Museum, 63a West Street -**  
Saturday 10 - 5; Sunday 12 - 5.
- Downs Solicitors, 156 High Street, Dorking -**  
Saturday & Sunday 2 - 5. Refreshments.
- Friends Meeting House, Butter Hill, Dorking -**  
Saturday 10 - 5; Sunday 12 - 5. Refreshments.
- Lowfield Heath Windmill, Russ Hill, Charlwood -**  
Sunday 12 - 6.
- Marelands Barn and Nyes Place, Rusper Road, Newdigate -**  
Saturday & Sunday 10 - 4.
- Milton Court, Westcott Road, Dorking -**  
Saturday 12 - 3. PRE-BOOKING NECESSARY (01306-873154).
- Pippbrook (MVDC offices), Reigate Road -**  
Saturday 10 - 1. Refreshments.
- Pippbrook House, Reigate Road, Dorking -**  
Saturday tours at 11, 11.40, 1 and 1.40. PRE-BOOKING NECESSARY (01306-881717).
- Providence Chapel, Chapel Road, Charlwood -**  
Saturday tours at 10.30, 12 and 4.30.
- St John the Evangelist Church, off A25 at Wotton (opposite Wotton Hatch) -**  
Saturday 11 - 5; Sunday 12.30 - 5.
- St John's Free Church, Westcott (off A25 behind Balchins Stores) -**  
Saturday 11 - 6; Sunday 2 - 6.
- St Martin's Church, off High Street, Dorking -**  
Saturday 10 - 4; Sunday 12 - 3. Tours at 11 and 3 on Saturday and 2 on Sunday.
- St Mary the Virgin Church, Horsham Road, Holmbury St Mary -**  
Saturday & Sunday 10 - 5.
- St Mary the Virgin Church, Reigate Road, Buckland -**  
Saturday dawn to dusk.
- St Michael and All Angels Church, Old London Road, Mickleham -**  
Saturday 9 - 6; Sunday 11 - 6.
- St Michael's Church, The Street, Betchworth -**  
Saturday & Sunday 10 - 4.

ALSO MANY WALKS

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**MEMBERSHIP**

I am very pleased to report that our membership now stands at 1013 individual and 53 corporate members. Our thanks are due to Barry Collins who managed to recruit new members at the Dorking Steam Day and also from the audience at a talk given to the Abinger Common WI.

Although I can report new members, we are still a long way from our target of 2000 members by the Millennium, so please try and recruit just one new member each and our target can easily be reached. As a lobby group, the Society very much depends on membership support.

If you have any queries regarding your membership, please do get in touch

Our new members are -

- Mr & Mrs M Adler ..... Logmore Green
- Mr & Mrs D Bradley ..... Wotton
- Mrs A Crampion ..... Tadworth
- Mr & Mrs P Gardner ..... Dorking
- Mr & Mrs P Hamilton ..... Leatherhead
- Mrs C Handen ..... Reigate
- Mrs L Hayes ..... S Holmwood
- Mr J Moss ..... Dorking
- Mr & Mrs S Roch ..... Dorking
- Mr & Mrs Siberry ..... Mickleham
- Mr E Spellen ..... Dorking
- Mr & Mrs R Spurr ..... London
- Mrs J Warne ..... Holmbury St Mary
- Mr & Mrs J Woodcock ..... Betchworth

Welcome to the Society!

**Mo Bushell**

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ALSO MANY WALKS

## CORPORATE MEMBERS SUPPORTING THE SOCIETY

Note that all addresses are of Dorking town and all telephone numbers have the code 01306, unless shown otherwise.

Name	Address	Tel.	Address
Abbey Information Systems Ltd.	1 Paper Mews, 330 High St., RH4 2TU	740 553	Computer consultancy
John Arthur Gallery	Old King's Head Ct., 11 High St., RH4 1AR	741 120	Fine art gallery
Ashcombe School, The	Ashcombe Road	886 312	School
Betchworth Park Golf Club	Reigate Road, RH4 1NZ	882 052	Golf Club
Bradney & Co.	56 Dene Street, RH4 2DP	743 939	Chartered accountants
Broadheath Restorations	Myrtle Cottage, Newdigate RH5 5AD	631 773	Window frame restorers
Bullimores	156 South Street, RH4 2EU	880 880	Chartered accountants
Classic Bedrooms	120 South Street, RH4 2EU	880 330	Retailer
Country Gardens Ltd.	Reigate Road, RH4 1NP	884 845	Garden Centre
Cowan & Wood	114 South Street, RH4 2EZ	886 622	Solicitors
Omya UK	Curtis Road, Dorking	886 688	Mineral extraction
Dorking Golf Club	Club House, Deepdene Avenue, RH5 4BX	886 917	Golf Club
Dorking School of Motoring	3 Lyons Court, RH4 1AB	880 119	Driving School
Downs	156 High Street, RH4 1BQ	880 110	Solicitors and notaries
Edolph's Farm	Norwood Hill Road, Charlwood, RH6 0EB	01293 862 130	Farm
Ellis Atkins & Co.	1 Paper Mews, 330 High Street, RH4 2TU	886 681	Chartered accountants
Friends' Provident Life Office	Pixham End, RH4 1QA	740 123	Life Assurance
Patrick Gardner & Co.	16 South Street, RH4 2HQ	877 775	Estate Agents
Garth House Nursing Home	Tower Hill Road, RH4 2AY	880 511	Nursing home
Graham Leather Ltd.	64/65 West Street, RH4 1BS	887 727	China and glassware
Hammond Concrete Tstg. & Servs.	P.O. Box 75, 2 Cedar Close, RH4 2YX	887 854	Concrete contractor
Hart Scales & Hodges	159 High Street, RH4 1AD	884 432	Solicitors
Harvey-Jones, Phillips Prtnrship.	57 West Street, RH4 1BS	742 200	Ind. financial advisers
Holly & Laurel	Horsham Road, South Holmwood	885 460	Fireplaces; Tea-room
Hurtwood Litho Printers	39a South Street, RH4 2JX	877 557	Printers
Ian Munro	10 High Street, RH4 1AT	882 270	Men's outfitters
International Sports Mktg. Ltd.	Bales Ct., Barrington Rd., RH4 3EJ	743 322	Marketing consultants
King's Court Galleries	54 West Street, RH4 1BS	881 757	Art gallery and framers
Kuoni Travel Ltd.	Deepdene Avenue, RH5 4AZ	840 888	Tour operators
LocoScript Software Ltd.	Unit 10/11, Vincent Works, RH4 3HJ	747 757	Computer software
Newspaper Press Fund	Dickens House, 35 Wathen Road, RH4 1JY	887 511	Charity
Newton & Co.	173 High Street, RH4 1AD	884 208	Chartered accountants
Rose Hill Nursing Home	9 Rose Hill, RH4 2EG	882 622	Nursing home
Michael Schryver Antiques Ltd.	The Granary, 10 North Street, RH4 1DN	881 110	Antiques restoration
Phillip Sears Designs	18c Horsham Road, RH4 2JD	884 477	Architectural bldg. surveyors
W. Songhurst Ltd.	Masters House, Guildford Rd., Westcott, RH4 3NG	880 411	Builders
Treeline	The Spinney, Horsham Road, Wallis Wood	741 800	Tree care and maintenance
Unum Ltd.	Milton Court, RH4 3LZ	887 766	Disability insurers
Venhill Engineering	21 Ranmore Road, RH4 1HE	885 111	Specialist cable mfrs.
Viscount Agencies	Concept House, 3 Dene Street, RH4 2DR	880 715	Duty free agency
L. A. White (Dkg.) Ltd.	11 Yew Tree Road, RH4 1HU	885 245	Builder
White & Sons	104 High Street, RH4 1AZ	887 654	Estate agents
Whitelegg Machines Ltd.	Fir Treet Ho., Horsham Rd., Beare Grm., RH5 4LQ	713 200	Electrical engineers

## OTHER CORPORATE MEMBERS SUPPORTING THE SOCIETY:

Bartholomew Court Residents' Association  
 Box Hill Afternoon Women's Institute  
 Brockham Green Village Society  
 Coldharbour Sports and Social Club  
 Friends of Box Hill

Holmwood Women's Institute  
 Leigh Residents' Association  
 Mickleham Parish Council  
 Newdigate Parish Council  
 Westcott Village Association

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Published by the DORKING & DISTRICT PRESERVATION SOCIETY  
 Hon. Secretary, Mr. Ian Brotchie, Dormer Cott., Deepdene Wood, Dorking RH5 4BQ. Tel. 01306 889374

NEWSLETTER No. 23

...And since the lawless Grass will oft invade  
The neighb'ring Walks, repress th' aspiring Blade,  
Suffer no Grass or rugged dirt t'impair  
Your smoother Paths. But to the Gard'ner's care  
These things we leave; they are his Business,  
With setting Flowers and planting fruitful Trees:  
And with the Master let the Servants join,  
With him their willing Hearts and Hands combine,  
Some should with Rowers tame the yielding Ground,  
Making it plain where ruder Clods abound.  
Some may fit Moisture to your Meadows give,  
And so the Plants and Gardens may derive  
Refreshing streams; let others sweep away  
The fallen Leaves; mend hedges that Decay:  
Cut off superfluous Boughs; or with a Spade  
Find where the Moles their winding Nests have made;  
Then close them up. Another flowers may sow  
In Beds prepar'd; on all some Task bestow;  
That if the Master happens to come down,  
To fly the Smoak and Clamour of the Town,  
He in his villa none may idle find,  
But secret Joys may please his wearied Mind.